

was serious So strong, indeed, was the miners' case, that when the Government offered, under special Act of Parlia- ment, to set up a Statutory Commission, presided over by a Judge of the High Court, and pledged itself to abide by and act upon its findings, the Conference called by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain was far from unanimous for acceptance They did accept, finally, only on the specific understanding that strike notices should be suspended for but three weeks, within which time an Interim Report \vas to be presented by the Commission, and, further, that the Federation should nominate not only three of its own members, to balance three coal-owners, but three out of the six experts who were to be associated with them The three experts whom the M F G B selected were Sidney Webb, R H Tawney, and Sir Leo Chiozza-Money

The Act setting up the Ro\al Commission gave it \er) wide powers, and expressly instructed it to go into

"Any scheme that ma> be submitted to, or formulated by, the Commissioners for the future organisation of the Coal Industry, whether on the present basis, on the basis of joint control, nationalisation, or any other basis "

Lord Sankey (at that time, Mr Justice Sankey) \vas appointed to preside over this Grand Inquest into the Coal Industry The Sankey Commission held its first meeting on March 3rd, 1919, and continued, \with a short break, to sit in public several times a week, up to the beginning of June 1919 It not only sat in public, it was, from the point of

view of the public, *the* show of the day the focus
of interest
and of conversation The newspaper is
"featured" it—as
well they might To hear the Duke of
Northumberland
cross-examined by Sidney Webb on "living by
owning," and
on the intricate details of a vast business of
which the
questioner knew infinitely more than he did,
was a dramatic
as well as intellectual diversion Alternating
with great